IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 5, 7, 13-15, 18-22, 24, 26-47, 50-176, and 186 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please enter the following amended claims:

23. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein growth of the first nitride semiconductor portion in the step (b) is performed by a metalorganic vapor-phase epitaxial method.

184. (Amended) A nitride semiconductor device comprising a nitride semiconductor device structure supported on said nitride semiconductor substrate as defined in claim 177.

Please add the following new claims:

187. (New) A nitride semiconductor laser diode device comprising a nitride semiconductor substrate, and a laser diode element provided over said nitride semiconductor substrate, wherein said nitride semiconductor substrate has been prepared by (a) forming a first selective growth mask on a support member comprising (i) a dissimilar substrate made of a material different from a nitride semiconductor and having a major surface, and (ii) an underlayer made of nitride semiconductor formed over the major surface of said dissimilar substrate, said first selective growth mask having a plurality of first windows selectively exposing an upper surface of said underlayer of the support member; and (b) growing nitride semiconductor portions from the upper surface portions, of the underlayer, which are exposed from said windows, by using a gaseous Group 3 element source and a gaseous nitrogen source, until the nitride semiconductor portions grown in the adjacent windows combine with each other

on the upper surface of said selective growth mask, to provide said nitride semiconductor substrate.

188. (New) The device of claim 187, wherein said laser diode element comprises an active layer made of a nitride semiconductor material, which is provided between a p-type clad layer made of a p-type nitirde semiconductor material and an n-type clad layer made of an n-type nitirde semiconductor material.